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11 JAN 1956

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Support)

SUBJECT : Career Development Program

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1. You have requested that I offer some observations and critical comments regarding the Career Development Program in which I participated from 6 August 1954 through 7 October 1955. In general, I believe rotational training is valuable and worthwhile. Each program must be planned especially for the individual participant and should be completely flexible to permit the trainee to influence alteration and change as constantly as may be necessary to maintain his interest and ensure that maximum value is derived from the time utilized.

2. Apart from the fact that the individual is exposed to, and necessarily acquires, a knowledge of a great mass of detail, rotational training provides:

a. An awareness and understanding of problems involved in administration and the provision of support to other components of the Agency.

b. A basic understanding of the organization and functions of each component visited and their functional relationships with other organizational units.

c. Familiarity with policies and procedures in each component and an understanding of the reasons which have caused them to be developed.

d. An opportunity for the individual to know and become known to the people in the components visited who are charged with the responsibility for performing the support functions of the Agency. This, perhaps, is the most important single factor because it provides the individual with a basic source of information and assistance; i.e., he learns where and to whom he can and should go to get help, or to get something done.

3. The primary advantage to performance training is that it provides a break in the lecture-type orientation and briefing. This permits the trainee to assimilate the information he has acquired and provides an opportunity for him to make some contribution and be reasonably productive between phases of the program. In my opinion, however, this is not a sufficient advantage to justify the inclusion in the program of prolonged periods for performance training. Quite to the contrary, I believe that performance training in each of the major support components is not practical.


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The positions in the support components which would provide the most valid background for a potential Administrative Officer usually require certain minimum technical qualifications which the trainee does not have. Without these qualifications, his performance is limited to routine duties which require no particular qualification or technical competence and performance training tends to degenerate into busy work. In addition, even if it were possible for him to become an integral part of the component, this type of performance training tends to develop a specialization rather than provide the type of background presumably most valuable for performance as a general Administrative Officer. One further point in this connection is the reluctance of SH/P components to have transient trainees from other elements become familiar with their clandestine operations. This is a definite handicap to the participant who is thereby further relegated to the periphery of operations.

4. In my opinion, performance training can be of sufficient value to justify its continuance only if it is provided in the type of position it is expected the individual will assume upon completion of his program. For example, I should like to suggest that Career Development positions might be utilized by assigning the trainee to the administrative office of an Area Division for the term of the program. During this time he could receive actual performance training as an administrative officer. By using a Career Development position, he could be relatively free from the pressure of business which would exist if he were actually assigned to the Division as an Administrative Officer and it would be possible for him to visit each of the major support components for sufficient time to accomplish the thorough briefing and orientation which is the essence of rotational training. I would provide the additional advantage of familiarizing the individual with the types of problems to which he should seek solutions during his visits to the support offices.

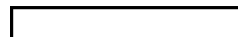
5. I should like the opportunity to discuss this with you further, and appear before the Career Service Board, if you think that might be desirable, to answer any questions, or provide any further views.

6. Finally, I should like to mention that I was very favorably impressed by the genuine and sincere interest shown to me as an individual, and with regard to the career development program in general, by everyone with whom I was associated during this training period.


Executive Officer
Building Planning Staff

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